

Congratulations



“YOU” are a

2015-2016

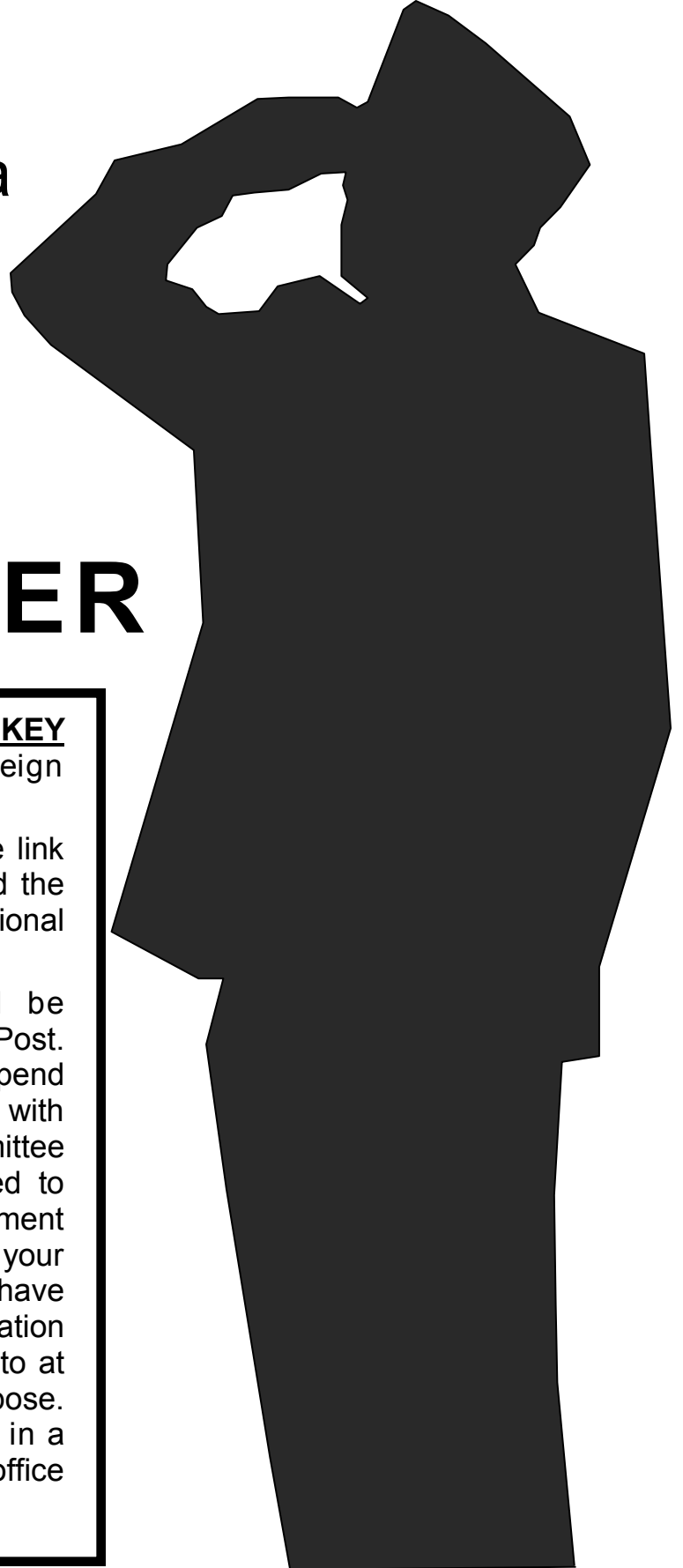
POST COMMANDER

YOU HAVE BEEN ELECTED TO THE KEY POSITION in the Veterans of Foreign Wars Organizational plan.

For the next year, you will serve as the link between the members of your Post and the District, Department and National Organizations.

YOU, more than anyone else, will be responsible for the success of your Post. The measure of **YOUR** success will depend upon **YOUR** diplomacy and the wisdom with which **YOU** choose **YOUR** committee chairmen. These sheets are presented to you with the best wishes of your Department Officers. They have been prepared for your information and guidance. We have attempted to give you enough information about each Minnesota V.F.W. program to at least make you familiar with it's purpose.

USE THESE PAGES AS A STARTER in a loose leaf binder during your year in office and refer to them often.



What Makes the V.F.W. Tick?

Your **District** will hold anywhere from three to five meetings during the next year, including a Convention, usually held in April or May. As Post Commander, you, as well as the District delegates from your Post, will have a voice in it's proceedings. Your District Commander will be your closest contact with the Department and will probably visit your Post at least once during the year. He does not get paid for his work, although he may receive a mileage allowance for his necessary travels. Fifty cents of each member's dues goes to support your District programs. It is of vital importance to your Post and District that you and the elected delegates from your Post attend all District meetings. The team of "All State Post Commanders" will be chosen primarily by use of a point system. Your attendance at District meetings will be one of the ways to put you on the path to earning the title of "All State Post Commander".

As you begin your year as Post Commander, you have an equal opportunity with 265 other Post Commanders to be named "All State Post Commanders". **It is up to you to earn it!!** An explanation of the "All State Post Commander" point system will be included in the membership bulletins.

Your National VFW Headquarters

THE V.F.W. NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS address is 406 W. 34th St., Kansas City, Missouri 64111. Most of the activities of the Veterans of Foreign Wars are directed from there. (Their Web Page address is www.vfw.org)

Our Washington Office, located at 200 Maryland Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20002 is the center of activity for handling the V.F.W. legislative and rehabilitation programs.

Except for the National Supply Department, you will have little direct contact with the National offices, since most business you will have with them will be channeled through Department (State) Headquarters, and such mail should be directed to:

Department of Minnesota, V.F.W.
Rice St Station - PO Box 17146
St. Paul, MN 55117-0146
Web Page - www.mn.gov/vfw
Email—mnvfw@vfwmn.us

THE NATIONAL CONVENTION of the Veterans of Foreign Wars will be held this year in:

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

At this convention, the policies and mandates of the V.F.W. will be set, this will be based on the resolutions passed by the delegates at that convention.

Advance Registration at that Convention is a requirement of every Post. This is a \$25 fee plus \$10 for each attending delegate. If you have a delegate attending the Convention and do not register in advance, the cost at the door is \$12. If you do not attend, a complete Convention packet will be mailed to you following the National Convention.

Your V.F.W. State Headquarters

Also Known as "DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS"

The supreme authority of the Veterans of Foreign Wars on the State level is the Department or State V.F.W. Convention, which is held each year during the first, second or third weekend of June. As Post Commander it is hoped that you will attend the Department Convention that signals the close of your year as Commander.

Your Department Headquarters is at the State Veterans Service Building in St. Paul, where a full-time staff of three employees are presently employed. They, the staff from our Claims Office at Fort Snelling and our VAMC Hospital Representative are the only persons deriving income from the Department organization. Other Department Officers and Committeemen are all working as volunteers.

One of the primary purposes of your Headquarters office is to help you with your problems or concerns. Letters and emails from you are always welcome and will always receive a prompt reply. Send your letters to:

Department of Minnesota, VFW
Web Page
www.mn.gov/vfw

Department of Minnesota, VFW
Rice Street Station - PO Box 17146
St. Paul, MN 55117
Phone: 651-291-1757
Fax: 651-291-2753
E-mail: mnvfw@vfwmn.us

**** For More Information
about the Services
available to any Veteran,
widow or a dependent.**

Contact:
V.F.W. Claims and Service Office
1 Federal Dr. - Room 900
Fort Snelling, MN 55111
Phone: 612-970-5669
Fax: 612-970-5404
E-mail: JON.GOHN@va.gov

THE V.F.W. CLAIMS AND SERVICE OFFICE is maintained at the Fort Snelling Federal Building to assist Veterans in their dealings with the Veterans Administration. This office was established to serve all Veterans in obtaining Veterans Benefits. Any Veteran who has a VA Claim or "C" number should establish his Power of Attorney with the V.F.W. Claims office at the above address.

Your Post Service Officer should maintain contact with the V.F.W. Claims office in order to more efficiently discharge his duties. The major portion of the cost of this office comes from your dues, 10% from the Department's share of the Poppy Distribution and 25% from a State appropriation.

Gopher Oversea'r

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION, DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

THE GOPHER OVERSEA'R is the official publication of the Department and will, as far as possible, carry all news and announcements of Department functions and activities. Part of each member's dues is designated as a subscription to this paper.

The Oversea'r is printed three times each year. The First of August, December, and May. Deadline Date for the news is the 15th of the month previous to mailing.

The Gopher Oversea'r mailing list is the same as that used for the V.F.W. National Magazine, therefore, all address changes must be directed to V.F.W. National Headquarters. Such changes should be addressed to: V.F.W. Magazine, Circulation Department, 406 W. 34th St., Kansas City, MO 64111.

COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION

YOUR COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION consists of the elected Department officers — the Department Adjutant, Chief of Staff, Chief Inspector and the nine District Commanders. They will probably meet four times during the year and have the responsibility of setting up the programs, guarding the finances and settling the problems of the Department between Conventions. Their meetings are open to the membership and you are welcome to attend. Your District Commander is your representative on the Council and should be consulted before you present any item of business for the consideration the Council of Administration.

NEW DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES

Each of the Department activities is governed by a committee or appointed Chairman. Some committees, such as Finance and Legislative are elected in accordance with the provisions of the Department By-Laws; others are appointed by the Department Commander. These Committees have the duty of administering their particular activity, subject to the limitations of the Department Convention and to the approval of the Department Commander and the Council of Administration.

V.F.W. Supplies - Where and How to Get Them

THERE ARE MANY PUBLICATIONS to help you in the performance of your duties and copies should be in your possession or in the possession of the officer concerned.

Among these are:

V.F.W. SUPPLY CATALOG: Each Quartermaster receives one of these from the National Supply Department in Kansas City each year. Your outgoing Quartermaster is expected to turn his copy over to his successor. Most of the items listed in the following paragraphs are available through this catalog. With very few exceptions, the Department **DOES NOT** stock any of the items listed in the catalog.

ITEMS THAT ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE V.F.W. SUPPLY CATALOG:

CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS... (Includes Manual of Procedure)

RITUAL

SPECIAL PODIUM EDITION - (Contains both the Constitution and By-laws, Manual of Procedure & Ritual)

DEMETER'S MANUAL OF PARLIAMENTARY LAW AND PROCEDURE

AND MANY OTHER PUBLICATIONS TO HELP A POST FUNCTION

AVAILABLE THROUGH DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS:

V.F.W. SERVICE OFFICERS GUIDE ... \$7.50 per copy

VFW PATCHES - \$1.75 each

DEPARTMENT BY-LAW - (Request copy from State Headquarters - updated copies published after each State Convention.)

MEMBERSHIP SUPPLIES: Most membership supplies such as:

Membership Application Brochures
Life Member Application Form
VFW Story

These are available to Post Quartermasters in quantities that are adequate for Posts of similar size. Quartermasters may request these supplies from Department Headquarters.

An 8½ X 11 sheet listing the eligibility dates that are the basic requirements for V.F.W. membership is available in limited quantities to Post Commanders for distribution to his membership committee.

PROGRAMS and the Chairmen you'll need to help you....

Community Activities

Your Post Chairman _____ Phone # _____

The Post is the key unit of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the success of the Post is directly proportional to it's own community. Any activity which will be of benefit to the community will result in larger membership and greater influence for the organization. For this reason, the Department of Minnesota and the National Organization annually conduct a **COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CONTEST**.

Each Post is expected to keep a record, in scrapbook form, of activities it has sponsored or conducted during the year (April 1 through March 31.) At the close of the Community Activity year, these recordbooks are to be submitted to the Department Chairman for judging. Awards and Citations are offered by the Department for the best records of Community Service Activities. There will be National Awards for: "Outstanding Community Service Post". The Veterans of Foreign Wars is considered a leader in this field.

This is a program which needs the full cooperation of your Auxiliary. Equal credit is given to both Post, Ladies and Men's Auxiliary for activities sponsored by either or all three groups.

LITE-A-TIKE *** WILL SAVE A LIFE

Your Post Chairman _____ Phone # _____

Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company and the Veterans of Foreign Wars are again furnishing "Scotchlite" reflectors for use in marking backpacks. Tape is available to reflectorize packs only through V.F.W. Posts. This is an exclusive program through the V.F.W. and the Post must order the tape through the V.F.W. Emblem & Supply, National Headquarters, 406 W 34th St., Kansas City, MO 64111.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

Your Post Chairman _____ Phone # _____

MEMBERSHIP in the Veterans of Foreign Wars is on a calendar year basis. **OUR GOAL IS ALWAYS 100%** paid up membership by January 1st. For that reason, our drive starts early and emphasis is placed on early payment of dues. Dues reminder notices will be sent directly to your members from the V.F.W. National Headquarters in 30, 60 and 90 days prior to the end of their membership year.

Dues reminders will be sent to only those continuous members who have not paid their dues 15 days prior to the mailing date.

NEW MEMBERS can be recruited at any time, but the earlier the better.

State and National membership awards and contests are noted in the Commander's Leadership Manual, the Department Membership Program and from your District officers. Many valuable prizes are available to Posts which complete their drives early.

After a member pays their dues, why not consider enclosing a letter of thanks and in the case of a new or reinstated member, we do suggest enclosing a letter of welcome aboard or welcome back. (See samples on page 15 of this booklet.)

LEGISLATIVE

City - County - State - Nation

Your Post Chairman _____ Phone # _____

The Legislative programs of the Veterans of Foreign Wars are set each year at the Department and National Conventions by the resolutions approved by the Convention Delegates. Your Department Legislative Chairman, Tom McLaughlin is bound by the mandates given to him at that time. You will be kept informed of the progress of these programs and, at times, will be asked to assist in their successful completion.

Letters from you and members of your Post to your Legislators at the State Capitol or to the United States Senators and Congressmen in Washington, are invaluable in the success of our Legislative programs that concern Veterans. Often your help will be needed to write letters, make phone calls, or to attend hearings on critical Veterans legislative matters.

Our Representatives in the Congress of the United States:

(Some may be subject to change in an Election Year.)

1st District: Congressman TIM WALZ, Longworth House Office Building
2nd District: Congressman JOHN KLINE, Longworth House Office Building
3rd District: Congressman ERIK PAULSEN, Cannon House Office Building
4th District: Congressman BETTY MC COLLUM, Longworth House Office Building
5th District: Congressman KEITH ELLISON, Longworth House Office Building
6th District: Congressman TOM EMMER, CANNON House Office Building
7th District: Congressman COLIN PETERSON, Rayburn House Office Building
8th District: Congressman RICHARD NOLAN, Rayburn House Office Building

All House Office Buildings are Washington, DC 20515

United States Senators are:

Senator AL FRANKEN , Senate Russell Office Building

Senator AMY KLOBUCHAR, Senate Russell Office Building

All Senate Office Buildings are Washington, DC 20510.

HOW TO WRITE YOUR SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN...
See your Commander's Leadership Manual.

BUDDY POPPY

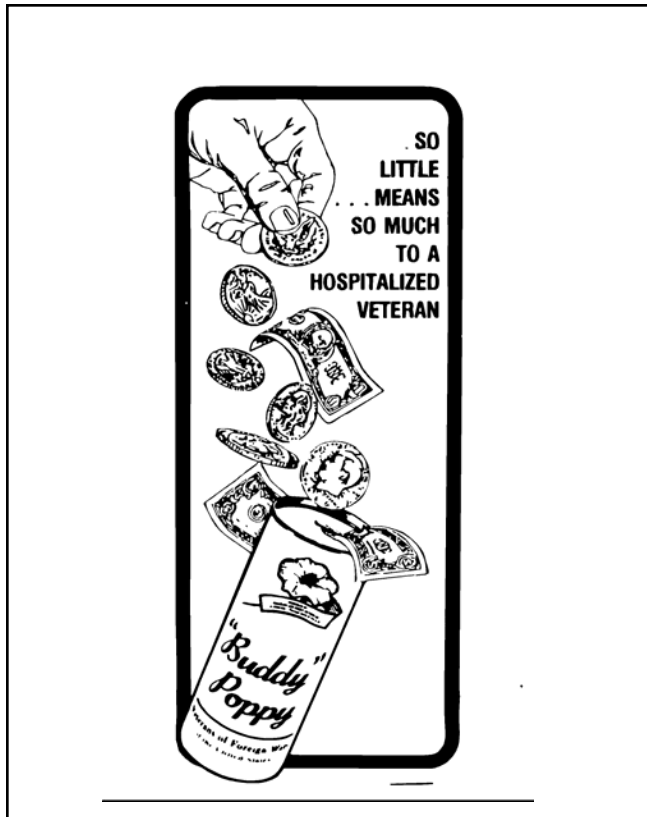
Your Post Chairman _____ Phone # _____

The distribution of Buddy Poppies during the period preceding Memorial Day has become traditional in Minnesota and is accepted by the public as one of the most worthwhile charities in existence. More than half of the proceeds of the Poppy distributions are kept

by the Post or Auxiliary and used for local relief purposes. The balance is divided between the V.F.W. National Home at Eaton Rapids, Michigan, and the Department and National veterans' assistance funds. The entire Department share is used for the support of its Claims Service Office at Fort Snelling.

One of your important duties as Post Commander is to appoint one of your best workers as Poppy Chairman and then help him in the organization and promotion of Buddy Poppies in your community.

In order to properly support our veterans assistance programs on all levels, a 10% increase in Poppy sales is needed. Our goal this year is an order from every Post and an increase over last year's Department total.



MINNESOTA has consistently been a leader in the Posts and Auxiliaries ordering "Buddy" Poppies. For several years we have recorded over ONE MILLION poppies distributed in Minnesota. (This is one Poppy for every three people in our State.) **NO OTHER V.F.W. STATE** can claim this record

All V.F.W. "BUDDY Poppies in Minnesota are assembled by patients at the VA Hospitals and the Minnesota Veterans Homes in Minneapolis and Hastings.

All Correspondence on Poppies **MUST** be directed to **V.F.W. STATE HEADQUARTERS IN ST. PAUL.**

*****DO NOT WRITE TO NATIONAL V.F.W. HEADQUARTERS *****

V.F.W. NATIONAL HOME

Your Post Chairman _____ Phone # _____

The main goal of the V.F.W. National Home is to keep the family together so they serve the widows and orphans of our deceased members.

Each Post Commander and Auxiliary President should be fully informed about the National Home. Your support is needed in promoting the V.F.W. National Home by recommending the home to the widows of your Post members and orphans of both Post and Auxiliary members. In addition to recommending the Home, there is a need for financial support. This can be done with members being encouraged to contribute to the Seals Program. Unfortunately, in recent years only five percent of the membership contributed to the Seals Program. Even a dollar per member would have been of enormous help to the operating expenses of the Home. Another way to help the Home is to encourage members to purchase a Life Membership in the V.F.W. National Home. The cost is only \$35.00 and it entitles each Life Member to a vote for the members of the Board of Trustees. The \$35.00 is put into a Trust Fund and the interest earned is used for the operation of the V.F.W. National Home.



HELP INSURE OUR NATIONAL HOME

A living monument to our deceased and disabled comrades.

IMPORTANT - Furnish complete addresses.



V.F.W. NATIONAL HOME
3573 S. Waverly Rd.
Eaton Rapids, MI 48827

_____, 2015

I herewith apply for Life Membership in the V.F.W. NATIONAL HOME, Eaton Rapids, Michigan for:

Name _____ Post or Auxiliary No. _____

Address _____

\$ _____ Zip Code _____

PLEASE MAIL CERTIFICATE TO:

Name _____ Post or Auxiliary No. _____

Address _____

_____ Zip Code _____

NOTE: Associate life memberships are available and organizations that are not members of the V.F.W. or Ladies Auxiliary, at a cost of \$35.00 also. These are **non-voting** members. Information on request.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO V.F.W. NATIONAL HOME

AMERICANISM PATRIOTISM

Your Post Chairman _____ Phone # _____

One of the objects of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, as set forth in it's Constitution, is "... to maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States of America and fidelity to it's Constitution and laws; to foster true patriotism." In the pursuance of this object, we must wage a strong educational battle to acquaint people with the activities of those wishing to disrupt world peace and expand their radical or fundamentalist ideas and the methods used in promoting its purpose. Every V.F.W. Post should take an active part in Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Independence Day, Loyalty Day and any other patriotic observances.



Your Post Chairman _____ Phone # _____

In 1950 the V.F.W. inaugurated a nationwide observance of Loyalty Day on May 1st. This was a continuation of May 1st celebrations by some V.F.W. Posts in the East as a counter-demonstration to the worldwide annual mass May Day meetings held by the Communists.

On April 29, 1955, President Eisenhower signed the bill passed by the 84th Congress which proclaimed May 1, 1955, as the first official **LOYALTY DAY** and called upon all citizens to observe it by a reaffirmation of their loyalty to the United States of America.

Posts should encourage and assist in providing Loyalty Day Programs for their schools and communities.

For the latest information on Loyalty Day, each Post Loyalty Day Chairman should write to National Headquarters for the current Citizenship Education Booklet. Send your requests to:

Citizenship Education and Community Service
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
406 W 34th St.
Kansas City, MO 64111

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

Your Post Chairman _____ Phone # _____

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY



THE PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

What is it? A National Audio Essay Scholarship Competition designed to give high school students the opportunity to voice their opinions on their responsibility to our country and to convey their thoughts via the broadcasting media to all America.

Who is eligible? 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students in public, parochial and private schools or a home study program in the United States and overseas. U.S. Citizenship required. Former first place State Winners are not eligible to participate again.

What are the prizes? Each state winner is provided with a four-day all expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., plus the opportunity to compete for national scholarships totaling over \$132,000; 1st place—\$20,000; 2nd place—\$15,000; 3rd place—\$10,000; 4th place—\$6,000; 5th place—\$5,000; 6th place—\$5,000; 7th place—\$5,000; 8th place—\$4,000; 9th to 15th place—\$2,000 to \$3,000; 16th to 21st place—\$1,500; All additional scholarships—\$1,000.

Who sponsors the program? The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its Ladies

STATE AWARDS

1st place.....\$1,000.00
 2nd place..... 500.00
 3rd place..... 300.00
 4th place..... 250.00
 Five RUNNERS-UP.....100.00
 (Subject to change each year)

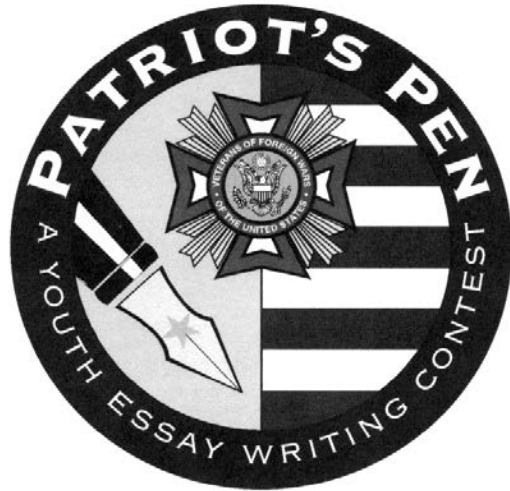
The annual "Voice of Democracy" program of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and it's Ladies Auxiliary provides an opportunity for every Post, regardless of size and location, to contribute toward a better understanding of our American way of life on the part of our youth. This program can only be successful if you appoint your Chairman immediately and he contacts the high schools in your area to get the VOD program on the school agenda for the Fall season.

In May at the close of the school year, each high school principal (575 in Minnesota) receives a letter from the V.F.W. National Commander, telling of the next theme for the Voice of Democracy. (Sometimes this information does not reach the principals hands. Therefore, we suggest you hand deliver the information to the school and home schools as soon as possible.)

The contest is open to all 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade students who prepare and deliver a 3 to 5 minute taped talk on a subject determined by the National VOD Committee. Winners in the local school contest will compete in a District Contest and the District winners will be entered in the Department Contest. Department awards prizes and the first place Department or State winner will receive an all-expense paid trip to Washington, DC where he or she will compete for more than \$132,000 in VFW National Scholarship Awards.

The total amount of money expended in this VFW program - throughout the U.S.

Patriots Pen



The annual “Patriots Pen” program of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Ladies Auxiliary provides an opportunity for every Post, regardless of size and location, to contribute toward a better understanding of our American way of life on the part of our youth. This program can only be successful if you appoint your Chairman immediately and he contacts the high schools in your area to get the VOD/PP program on the school agenda for the Fall season.

In May at the close of the school year, each high school principal (575 in Minnesota) receives a letter from the V.F.W. National Commander, telling of the next theme for Patriots Pen. (Sometimes this information does not reach the principals hands. Therefore, we suggest you hand deliver the information to the school and home schools as soon as possible.)

The contest is open to all 6th, 7th and 8th grade students who prepare and deliver a 200-300 word essay on a subject determined by the National Patriots Pen Committee. Winners in the local school contest will compete in a District Contest and the District winners will be entered in the Department Contest. Department awards prizes and the first place Department or State winner receives \$500.00

The total amount of money expended in this VFW program - throughout the U.S.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Your Post Chairman _____ Phone # _____

Junior Baseball Jr. Rifle & Firearms Safety

Sons of the V.F.W. Bantam Hockey

Boy Scouts of America Girl Scouts of America Patriot's Pen... and More

VETERAN ACTIVITIES

Your Post Chairman _____ Phone # _____

BOWLING... Every weekend in March and April

GOLF... Early August for all golfers

CRIBAGE... Every October

HORSESHOE... Every July

BLOOD DONORS

Your Post Chairman _____ Phone # _____

Every day there is a greater need for more blood donors in all the hospitals and it is more so in the Veterans Administration Hospitals. The Minneapolis VA Medical Center is the only VA facility that has such a donor program. Not only do you provide blood for the Minneapolis VA Medical Center, but you can easily establish a blood bank program that will protect every member of your Post and Auxiliary.

V.F.W. CANCER RESEARCH BUILDING at the University of Minnesota

Few members recall or even brag about the Cancer Research Building that was built at the University of Minnesota and dedicated in 1959. The V.F.W. Cancer Research Center is located at 406 SE Harvard St. on the U of M Campus in Minneapolis. Most of the Cancer Research at the University of Minnesota Hospitals is conducted in the V.F.W. Cancer Research Center.

At the V.F.W. State Convention in Rochester in June of 1976, the delegates voted to become involved in providing some of the needs of the V.F.W. Cancer Research Center at the University of Minnesota. They voted to approve a drive to raise \$100,000 to assist in continuing the search for the cure of cancer and named the program "Cancel Cancer". This resulted in more than \$110,000 being turned over for the necessary continued research. Voluntary contributions and memorials will continue to be accepted even though there will not be a concentrated drive to raise a specific sum. Contributions to aid the Research Program at the V.F.W. Cancer Research Center may be sent to the Minnesota V.F.W. with the notation that this be turned over to Cancer Research. All memorials will be sent an acknowledgment.

Visiting Hospitalized Veterans

V.F.W. and Auxiliary members have been involved in the Volunteer Services Program of the Veterans Administration at the many hospitals that serve Minnesota Veterans.

There are Veterans Administration Medical Centers (hospitals) located in Minneapolis, Fargo, St. Cloud and Sioux Falls. The State Commander has appointed a deputy VAVS Representative to serve each hospital and members of your Post will be contacted by the Representative for Volunteers and donations.

MINNESOTA VETERANS HOME

The Minnesota Veterans Home is adjacent to Minnehaha Park in South Minneapolis. There have been many changes in the facility since it was known as the "Soldier's Home". In 1978, the Minnesota Legislature made available the funds to restore the Hastings State Hospital and establish a satellite Veteran's home to accommodate 200 Veterans. In May, 1978, the ground was broken to add a 240 bed nursing home facility to the Minneapolis Veteran Home. In 1988, the Legislature passed a bill for a 89 bed home in Silver Bay, Minnesota; in 1990 a 83 bed home in Luverne, Minnesota and in 1994 a 89 bed home in Fergus Falls, Minnesota.

The homes serve mostly the Senior Citizen Veteran, wives and widows of Veterans. V.F.W. Posts are active in providing recreational programs for the residents of the homes.

**SAMPLE LETTER
FOR CONTINUOUS MEMBERS:**

Dear Comrade:

Thank you for paying your dues in what we believe to be the greatest Post in the whole Veterans of Foreign Wars. Enclosed is your Membership card for the year; this is your key to any V.F.W. Post in the United States.

If you haven't attended a Post meeting lately, just a reminder that our Post meets on the _____ of each month at 8:00 P.M. The next meeting will be on _____, _____.

Again, a most sincere **"Thank You"**.

Yours in Comradeship,

Post Commander

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**SAMPLE LETTER
FOR NEW AND REINSTATE MEMBERS:**

Dear Comrade,

Welcome to the most exclusive Veterans organization and especially to our Post # _____.

Our Post meets every _____ of the month at _____ P.M. at _____. You are most welcome to attend and take part in the meeting.

If this is your first meeting, please ask for me and I will see that you are introduced to everyone.

Yours in Comradeship,

Post Commander

Note: If your Post has a newsletter, you might want to enclose a copy for the new member and add a note telling him/her that this will be mailed to them each month.